

Patent Application of
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SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF INVENTION

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR COLLECTING VEHICLE FEES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

**STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH
OR DEVELOPMENT**

Not Applicable

REFERENCE TO A MICROFICHE APPENDIX

Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Federal, state and local road transportation and highway departments have depended in large measure on the use of collected tolls for road maintenance and construction.

The efforts to collect road-use fees at bridges and tunnels in the form of tolls has resulted in traffic back-up at tollbooths with adverse effects to the environment, personal safety, and business enterprise. In municipalities, the parking meter has served as a passive toll taker, but this method of fee collecting has not been fully successful. Evidence of this is the recent, trial innovation of print-out time-parking receipts which are to be placed on a vehicle's dashboard.

Parking meters have proved to have labor intensive costs. Ill-prepared meter readers have often written inaccurate license numbers and street locations. Arguments in face-to-face confrontations between meter readers and motorists is common. Coin box theft and severe damage to meters caused by automobiles and vandals demands expensive repairs and maintenance.

Under the current methods employed by authorized toll collection agencies, a motor vehicle operator must subscribe to a transponder-type fee collection system or queue-up to pay the required fee in cash. Utilization of the "cash-only" process necessitates a toll collector who must complete the collection which involves a time-consuming event adding to delays and traffic congestion and untoward accidents. Transponder- type fee collections have been largely unsuccessful since a majority of motorists do not subscribe to this type of system.

The invention relates to a method of collecting fees associated with vehicles for road usage wherein every vehicle contains its own unique identification code- similar or in concert with the known vehicle identification number (VIN)- comprised of a number, letter or symbol or combinations thereof.

Vehicle code readers (fixed or mobile) that transfer data to a central agency, or other appropriate means, are placed in selected area: entrances and exits to specified bridges, tunnels and highways. Municipalities will issue hand-held and auto-mounted vehicle-code-readers to police traffic managers who will in their normal course of activity scan designated streets to charge a fee for legal overnight parking, as well as for illegal double parking or standing, identifying the vehicle from its implanted I.D. code. The scanner is equipped to give full readings of date and time, and other relevant data as desired, to be programmed by the motor vehicle department, as well as the local police traffic manager. Traffic accidents can be immediately and easily recorded via the scanner and digital camera, verifying vehicle titles, insurance and the validity of licensed drivers. All these data can be instantly secured from stationery or mobile information capturing devices on moving or fixed I.D. codes.

Trucks and extended limousines can be assessed an additional road-use fee according to the number of axles and the approved laden weight, which incurs wear and tear of roads; and the limos will be assessed extended occupation of road and street space.

Most importantly, no current method provides for a passive, universal road-use system of collection of all vehicles.

[illegible]

The invention proposes a new and novel method to collect fees for road use which fund costs for maintenance and construction of all highways, roads and city streets. It proposes a re-design of toll-collection that is to be more equitably shared by owners of all registered vehicles regardless of the place of registration issuance, in the United States, Canada and/or Mexico.

The instant invention relates to a cost-effective method of collecting vehicular related fees different from any current method, using a passive identification system similar to the UPC coding found in food and department stores, or the magnetic strip of a plastic credit card.

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SEQUENCE LISTING

Not Applicable

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